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ABSTRACT

A dual-career family is a family in which both spouses are committed to occupational work and to a family life together and support each other's desires to combine roles that traditionally were viewed as incompatible. Male socialization in the areas of entitlement, dependency, and nurturance can cause problems for men in dual-career marriages. In addition to sharing power and status with women, men in dual-career families need to revise their sense of self. Benefits for men in dual-career marriages include freedom from the burden of total economic responsibility for the family and a chance to be more involved with their children. Stressors common in dual-career marriages include deciding whether, when, and how to parent; combining work and family; and job placement and occupational mobility. A successful dual-career marriage depends on many factors, most notably the spouses' willingness to integrate career and family despite societal pressures to conform to sex-typed roles. Personal, family, and societal resources are needed to achieve this integration. Spouses in dual-career families need to talk about their conflicts, seek out community resources, and recognize that change is rarely easy. To make a dual-career family work, spouses must understand the issues involved and work through their problems with flexibility, compassion, and patience. (NB)

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WHAT MAKES DUAL-CAREER MARRIAGES TICK?

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INTRODUCTION

When Dr. Lucia Gilbert began to study dual-career families back in 1977 with a small grant from the Hogg Foundation, the husbands in her sample refused to participate in the research. As she continued her work over the next several years, she found that attitude changing—men began to want to tell their side of the story. This additional data from the male perspective culminated in Dr. Gilbert's 1985 book, *Men in Dual Career Families*, a volume published by the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues.

In her foreword to that book, Lois Wladis Hoffman, President of SPSSI, underscores the importance of Dr. Gilbert's work, noting that as she addresses problems facing dual career families, she also considers interventions at both the individual and societal levels—interventions that might help couples as they attempt to blend their roles into healthy, productive marital relationships.

Dr. Gilbert is Professor of Educational Psychology at The University of Texas at Austin. She has been named a Fellow of the American Psychological Association. Her outstanding teaching has been recognized on several occasions, including her receiving the Texas Excellence Teaching Award at The University of Texas at Austin in 1986 and her appointment as a visiting professor at the University of Utah in 1987. Dr. Gilbert's interest in dual-career families continues as she explores role conflict, parenting, and adolescent development in dual-career and dual-worker families.

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WHAT MAKES DUAL-CAREER MARRIAGES TICK?

Men's and women's lives are very much linked. Recent changes in women's roles and goals personally and in their marriages have enormous impact on men. One visible sign of these changes is the rapid increase in the number of marriages in which both spouses pursue meaningful employment and at the same time raise a family together—what has come to be known as the dual-career family.

It is important to realize that although dual-career families have been with us for decades, in the past they operated under circumstances quite different from today. Most notably in the past women and men lived in a society in which the acceptance of male supremacy and dominance was for the most part not questioned. Women worked, but it was with the understanding that any occupational work was secondary to the needs of their husbands and children. They earned much less than men, were limited in their occupational choices, and, like their husbands, viewed the man as the main provider for women and children.

The situation today is quite different. Women in dual-career marriages do not "need" men the way that men (and women) were traditionally brought up to believe they did. Women who can support themselves, and want to do so, can afford to have expectations beyond financial security for their marriages. These women want men to be partners, not protectors; to be someone to look across at, not up to.

Much is known about women's reactions to these changes. And what is known is generally positive. Because women were the ones to enter careers and to add this role to their traditional family tasks, the focus has been on them. What about the male response? For the most part women are the ones who are pushing for more equitable roles with men, while men are being pushed and pulled into them.

The desire to live in a dual-career family has not emerged from dissatisfactions on the part of men. Why would they want to give up their dominant position in society and the family? And even if some individual men do, how do they and their spouses contend with their own traditional socialization? Parents do not understand. There are few role models. There are new conflicts. And society is ambivalent about supporting this new lifestyle.

For a long time it was difficult to get men in dual-career families to talk about what was going on in their lives. The typical response was, "Talk to my wife." About five years ago, however, a startling difference emerged. The men were saying, "Hey, how come researchers are not talking to us?" They were going through some of the same changes that were studied in women, yet they felt everyone was assuming that they had not changed at all and that women were doing all the changing. This situation resulted in a study on men's reactions to the dual-career family lifestyle. The study was designed to gain an understanding of these men's reality, as they construed it.

The men who were interviewed ranged in age from 28 to 45 years old and had been married at least two years to their present spouses (most were in first marriages). In all the families, both husband and wife were working full-time and had done so since the time of marriage. Most had children, and nearly all who did not said they were planning to have at least one child. The interviews averaged 75 minutes in length and were tape-recorded. Questions were asked about many aspects of their work, family, and personal lives.

This article describes the male side of things. It also describes the views of women in dual-career marriages. The purpose is to provide an understanding of life in a dual-career family—the obstacles, the opportunities, and the dilemmas. Questions specifically addressed are:

What are dual-career families?

What does living in a dual-career family mean for the male partner?

What are the satisfactions and rewards?

What are the main sources of stress?

What makes the dual-career marriage work?

What guidelines are there to assist these couples?

WHAT ARE DUAL-CAREER FAMILIES?

In 1980, dual-earner and dual-career families represented 52 percent of all married couples. Five years later, 69.9 percent of married women with children between the ages of 6 and 17 were employed full-time. Moreover, women now constitute nearly 39 percent of the professional labor force, compared with 26 percent in 1960; the large majority of these women are married and most have children. Not all these employed women live in dual-career families but an increasingly significant proportion do. In contrast to women in the larger category of dual-earner families, who typically work out of economic necessity, women in careers, similar to men, view what they do outside the home as very important to their life goals and sense of self.

Contrary to popular beliefs, two high power careers in the same family are not representative of dual-career families. Many combinations are possible ranging from two family-oriented spouses to two career-oriented spouses. The distinctive feature of the dual-career family is that BOTH spouses are committed to occupational work and to a family life together and support each other's desire to combine roles that traditionally were viewed as incompatible. In this kind of marriage it is not assumed that the woman will do her occupational work and all the work at home, too, and the man only his occupational work, helping out when he can.

The kind of balance that is achieved depends on what seems fair to the two individuals involved, based on their own preferences and the reality of their situation. More will be discussed on this topic after a look at what influences men who attempt this lifestyle and at the kinds of dilemmas and difficulties they typically face.

WHAT CHANGES FOR MEN?

Men are taught from birth that they must achieve in their work. In order to attain power, prestige, and money, many men readily sacrifice emotional expressiveness, intimacy, and relationships. To be a real man, and a successful one, the male must be an effective breadwinner, whatever the physical and emotional costs involved.

Finally, successful men are independent and do what is necessary to make their way in the world.

Such traditional socialization greatly affects men's behaviors, attitudes, and emotional responses. The influence of male socialization in three areas—entitlement, dependency, and nurturance—can be especially troublesome for men in dual-career marriages.

Entitlement

Many men advocate equality as an ideal. In reality they may view a woman's career as secondary, and the emotional support they provide to their spouses and their level of involvement in family work may reflect this view. Male prerogative demands that what men do or want to do should take precedence; and for many men, a successful husband should not have to do housework.

Being a supportive husband or involved father is difficult when so doing is experienced as infringing on a husband's needs to maintain his own dominance or as interfering with his own ambition. For example, he may be unable to get excited about his spouse's career success when he views his advances and salary as lagging behind. (Such a situation may cause embarrassment for the man and perhaps his spouse as well.) One man in a dual-career marriage described his struggle to live with his ambition and stay in his dual-career marriage as follows: "When I hold my daughter or brush out her hair or tell her stories, I am frightened by the side of me that wants to push ahead at her expense. At the same time, I feel that by taking on more of Roberta's (his wife) load I am losing ground in my career; it's like swimming with rocks in my pockets" (Wright, 1985, p. 166).

Dependency and Nurturance

The struggle to achieve a healthy balance between being dependent on someone and taking care of oneself is difficult for women and men alike. Women, on the one hand, have been encouraged to be more dependent than they really are. That is, they are encouraged to strengthen men by hiding their own strength and then

to protect men from the knowledge that they can take care of themselves. In everyday jargon, we refer to this as "protecting the male ego."

Men, on the other hand, are encouraged to deny any feelings of dependence and to assume that women are dependent on them. In effect, they are asked to hide any dependent feelings and instead to assume they have power and dominance over women. Thus, men's normal dependency on women becomes manifest as a need for power over women rather than a need for connectedness between equals. (Most men are not brought up to treat women as equals and most women are not brought up to be treated as equals.)

Men's difficulty in recognizing their own dependency can be especially problematic because a core ingredient in a successful dual-career marriage is spouse support. Spouse support not only involves valuing a wife's or husband's abilities and ambitions, it also involves emotional support, emphatic listening, and the ability to nurture. It requires putting aside one's own needs to be nurtured and doing so for another. It requires drawing out the emotions and feelings of the other person, something men have typically depended on women to do for them.

Indeed, one of the most typical motivations of men who choose the dual-career lifestyle is the desire to nurture—particularly their children. Close emotional relationships have increasingly become a core part of these individuals' sense of self. In fact, a value shift is occurring in our culture toward greater involvement of men in parenting (although many men do not participate in housework to the degree that women do). In my study of men in dual-career families, for example, 14 percent were judged by raters to be more involved than the wife in parenting, 32 percent as involved, and 54 percent less involved. One man in the study said, "It warms my heart and melts it when my son snuggles up to me." Another, with an older child, commented, "My relationship with . . . is better than I ever dreamed it could be."

In summary, when we look at the dual-career family from the male perspective, we see that for men the attainment of more egalitarian roles by women generally involves more than sharing status and power with women. Men in dual-career families also need to revise their sense of self. This is not a one-time task, and it is

not easily accomplished. All the same, many men are actively engaged in this process of change and, according to their reports, they do find it personally rewarding.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

There are stresses unique to the dual-career family. There are also benefits. The benefits for the female partner are readily identified. They include the opportunity to develop professionally and to establish a sense of self separate from a man and children as well as economic independence and greater intellectual companionship and contentment.

The benefits of dual-career marriage for men, at this point, are less dramatic and perhaps less evident than those for women; men have experienced less constraint from their traditional roles and have not asked for change. As one man said, "Sometimes I think, 'My father didn't do it that way, my friends don't do it that way, why should I?' But then I realize that those rules aren't in effect and it turns things from black and white to gray."

Historically, the successful man provided well economically for his dependent wife and children but had little involvement in the home. Thus, one clear benefit for the male partner is freedom from the burden of total economic responsibility for his spouse and family. For example, several men noted that their wives' incomes allowed them to shift careers or go back to school. A second important benefit is the man's chance to involve himself with his child or children and to express his human needs to nurture and bond.

Children in dual-career families benefit by having greater contact and involvement with both parents. They are also exposed to less sex-role stereotypic behavior in the home. One young man said, "The main advantage to me was seeing my mother, and, therefore, other women, as my equal and learning that I was just as responsible for doing work around the house." Most parents view their dual-career marriages as having benefits for their children. Several said that they didn't know if there were any benefits (or costs) but, as one put it, "That's how it is going to be. Children have

to adjust to you just like you have to adjust to them. If you give up a career you want just because of a child, it is negative for both."

WHAT ARE THE COMMON STRESSORS?

At the same time, stress is inevitable. Three areas are most troublesome to spouses in dual-career marriages.

Whether, When, and How to Parent

> We haven't decided not to have children but we wonder whether our desire to have children warrants the sacrifices that would be involved. (*A couple in their early thirties who love their work.*)

When dual-career couples consider whether or not to have children, they also face the additional question of who will care for them. Parenting is usually equated with mothering and this typically is still the case even among dual-career families. Moreover, given current employment benefits and policies, women are better able than men to ask for and receive the accommodations necessary for combining work and family responsibilities (e.g., maternity leaves, flexible schedules). As Congresswoman Pat Schroeder (1985) notes, "If the father would want to take off (to stay home with a newborn infant), if he even mentions it, it's like he has lace on his jockey shorts. You don't do that in America."

Perhaps most crucial to stress in this area is the importance of a child, and a close emotional relationship with a child, to each spouse's self-concept and life goals. Should this importance differ markedly between the spouses, the stress associated with a decision to remain childless could be considerable, depending on which spouse wanted a child more. Still today it is easier for the man to admit a low desire to be involved in child-rearing, and then to actually remain relatively uninvolved, than it is for the woman. The decision to have a child is also made more stressful when one spouse feels she (or he) will have to do all the accommodating. Finally, the psychological cost involved in deciding to have a child

is lowered by limiting the number of children to one or two (contrary to popular beliefs, only children are normal, happy, and well adjusted), by a commitment on the husband's part to be involved in parenting, and by redefining traditional ideas that suggest a child should be reared full-time by the mother.

For many parents, identifying quality day care is the next stressful task. Although some corporations and communities provide some assistance in this area, the identification of suitable day care is largely left to the individual family. In the vast majority of dual-career families some outside help is necessary to supplement the parents' care of children. The type of child care generally used depends on the age of the child. Most parents prefer group care for children older than 3 years, but they show no clear preference for individual or small-group care for children under 3 years of age.

Combining Work and Family

> I feel a split loyalty. This is an important time in my career, and children are small for such a short time. (*A woman in her mid-thirties with two preschool-aged children.*)

How to combine occupational and family roles can be a thorny source of stress for both women and men in dual-career families. Neither gender has role models for doing so, and neither gets much encouragement to do so or assistance from their professional world. The traditional societal norm has not changed—the family is still expected to accommodate to work demands.

My study of men in dual-career families found three basic ways in which spouses handled this situation and these are summarized in Table 1. In one, called the *traditional dual-career family*, the responsibility for family work is retained by the woman, who adds the work role to her traditionally held family role. In these families, the man believes that work within the home is women's work. The woman in these families generally accepts and acts upon the same premise. A husband in his early forties, for example, described his wife "as the best of the old and the best of the new. She does everything around the house because she enjoys it." Far more professionally ambitious than their wives, the men in these families

Table 1

Typical Ways Dual-Career Couples Handle Work and Family Roles

Dual-career family pattern	Household responsibilities	Parental responsibilities	Career responsibilities
Role-sharing	both spouses	both spouses	both spouses
Participant	mostly wife	both spouses	both spouses
Traditional	mostly wife	mostly wife	both spouses

typically earn significantly more than their wives and see their spouses as highly successful in combining careers with family life.

At the other extreme, and approaching the ideal image of the dual-career family, is the type called the *role-sharing dual-career family*. In these families both spouses are actively involved in both household duties and parenting. The role-sharing dual-career family is clearly the most egalitarian of the three types and best represents the pattern for which many couples strive. Spouses' salaries tend to be comparable and so is their involvement in childrearing and household chores. The men in these families are not simply "helping out" and are what some people call "the modern male." They change diapers, wash dishes, drive car pools, worry about sick children, and maintain a fairly rigid and strenuous work schedule. There seems to be an implicit assumption that neither spouse is more responsible for home responsibilities: "When one of us gets busy, the other takes more responsibility."

The third type, called the *participant dual-career family*, may be a transitional one. Here the parenting is shared by the spouses, but the woman retains responsibility for household duties. The husbands in these families want to know their children and, unlike their own fathers, want to be very involved with their children. But for them, housework is another story. "It's totally unfair and unreasonable," said one husband, "but she does everything." Another commented, "Intellectually I think the old values are unnecessary and wrong but in practice she has more responsibility than I do." Typically these men showed little motivation to change and seemed content to live with a somewhat ambivalent situation.

How do these ways of combining work and family come about? Not surprisingly, the patterns couples choose or find themselves in depend on a number of things. Categories which may be helpful in understanding possible influences are *personal factors, relationship factors,* and *environmental factors.* These are summarized in Table 2 and discussed when we consider, "what makes dual-career marriages work?"

Table 2

Factors Influencing How Couples Combine Work and Family Roles

Personal factors

Personality (e.g., how important is it for a person to have an intimate relationship, to be emotionally close with children, to be number one in her or his field?)

Attitudes and values (e.g., what are a person's beliefs about who should rear a child, who should be breadwinners?)

Interests and abilities (e.g., how committed are persons to their work, how satisfying is it to them, how successful are they at what they do?)

Relationship factors

Sources of power in the relationship (who decides on major purchases, who has the final say?)

Tasks that need to be done to maintain the family (who does the grocery shopping, who pays the bills?)

Environmental factors

The work situation (how flexible are work hours, can one work at home if a child is sick?)

Employers' views (if a parent leaves at 5 to pick up a child, will he or she be viewed as not ambitious enough?)

Societal norms and attitudes (is quality childcare readily available, do employers offer paid paternity leave?)

Support systems (are there friends or relatives to help out with parenting, are colleagues supportive?)

Job Placement and Occupational Mobility

> I wouldn't mind following her for her career. She has as much right to work elsewhere as I do, but I feel there are relatively few places that I would consider. (*A man in his late thirties married to a woman he views as much more ambitious and occupationally committed than himself.*)

Finding two equally attractive job offers within reasonable geographic proximity in a desired locale is no small feat and indeed may prove to be impossible. In fact, finding a job of choice or moving from a current position may very well be the most difficult issue for members of dual-career families. And there is no ready or easy solution.

Couples often wish to give equal weight to the interests of both partners. The reality, however, is that locations or relocations based on the husbands' needs are still the norm. Husbands are usually older than wives and have more years in their professions. Also, men still generally command higher salaries than women. Men reporting high stress for either spouse's receiving a job offer want to remain in their present situations because of the climate, their children, their family roots, or their positions. Those reporting low stress really have no conflict—they "would not consider moving."

Men's own sense of entitlement may come to the fore when decisions about relocation must be made. As one man remarked in this study, "It is difficult for the man in the family—me—to put my career at the mercy of my wife's. In the starkest psychological terms, I would be following her and abdicating my role as a man."

WHAT MAKES DUAL-CAREER MARRIAGES WORK?

A satisfying, fulfilling dual-career marriage depends on many things. Most important is the spouses' willingness to struggle with the difficulties of integrating career and family despite societal pressures to conform to sex-typed roles and behaviors. The re-

sources needed to weather these difficulties, dilemmas, and stresses are conceptually similar to the factors shown in Table 2.

Personal Resources

Most crucial among the personal resources for dealing with stressors are material or financial assets, education, physical health, and what psychologists called sociopsychological characteristics. These sociopsychological resources are especially important in dual-career couples, particularly one's personality and one's beliefs and attitudes about love, work, and how men and women should live their lives. For example, when the men in the study were asked, "Why is your marriage making it?" their most frequently noted reasons were personalities and values. Also important were characteristic ways of coping.

Men and women in dual-career families typically have high self-esteem, hold relatively liberal attitudes about sex roles, are supportive of their spouses' career efforts, and appreciate strengths in their spouses. When it comes to coping, strategies that reflect redefinition, compromise, realistic expectations, and commitment are most effective. As one man married to a businesswoman said, "Both of us are accommodating people. If an expectation is not met, that is not cause for walking out." Coping strategies are important for both short-term (e.g., whether to take a different job) and ongoing conflicts (e.g., providing quality care for an infant).

Three types of coping strategies are generally used:

(1) strategies that focus on an understanding of the problem,

(2) strategies that serve to manage the stress and are not directed to the problem itself, and

(3) strategies that require an action that would alter or change the source of stress.

Cognitive Restructuring, an example of a type (1) strategy, requires changes in attitudes, which in turn changes the meaning the conflict situation has for the individual involved. If a person were to use this strategy in dealing with conflicts between professional and parental roles, he or she might think, "It could be a lot worse" or "This is a natural feeling/reaction for working parents."

A common strategy illustrative of type (2) is *Increased Role*

Behavior. Individuals who use this strategy try to meet all existing demands; they work more efficiently and plan their time more carefully with the idea of fitting everything in and "doing it all." People who mainly use this strategy are what we call "superwomen" or "supermen."

Role Redefinition, in contrast, involves attempts to change the source of the stress and is an example of a type (3) strategy. This strategy is used when an individual arranges work schedules with an employer to allow time for certain parenting responsibilities, negotiates schedules with a spouse, hires a part-time bookkeeper for family affairs, or arranges for child care certain evenings a week even though both spouses will be at home. Other examples involve changes in definitions of life roles. For example, a person may view family or career as coming first, alter career or parenting aspirations temporarily, or change personal standards for home or work-related activities.

In general type (1) and type (2) strategies (e.g., Cognitive Restructuring and Increased Role Behavior) are more typically used in the early stages of career and family. Type (3) strategies, which require change, are more likely to be used when individuals feel more established and secure as a parent, spouse, and employee. How effective a particular strategy is also depends on the other resources available at the time and on one's life stage. Couples who have their first child when both partners are in the initial stages of demanding careers, for example, typically feel more stress than do couples who have their first child when both partners have established careers, regardless of which strategy they use.

Family Resources

The most essential family resource is spouse support—support by the husband for the wife's occupational work and support by the wife for the husband's involvement in parenting and housework. Stress is at a minimum when the husband has positive attitudes toward the wife's career and involves himself in housework and parenting. The husband is more involved in family work when the wife contributes more financially and when greater meaning and importance are attributed to her work by the family. Perhaps, not

surprising, the smaller the difference between the husband's and the wife's earnings, the greater his involvement in the family and home.

Spouses in a dual-career marriage typically struggle with their own sex-role socialization. Sometimes they need extra support in areas they find especially hard. For example, men committed to role sharing may find it embarrassing to "be caught" vacuuming or doing the laundry or to admit that their wives earn more of the family income than they do; their spouses, in contrast, may well feel reluctant to put their career needs ahead of the husbands' or to waken husbands for 2 a.m. feedings. Functioning as a dual-career couple may at times also require behaving in ways that counter societal expectations and risk peer disapproval. A man who "follows his wife," for example, is likely to find that professional colleagues and friends cannot understand why he doesn't divorce her or put his foot down and say, "Stop this career nonsense, woman, and get into the kitchen!"

Finally, the sense of fairness or equity about the balance of family and occupational roles achieved by the spouses is crucial. Equality of power is not the issue, but rather whether each partner feels that the other is doing his or her fair share when all aspects of the relationship are considered.

Societal Resources

This is the category of resource over which we have the least control. It is also the resource that is most unavailable for dual-career couples. At the present time, dual-career couples must cope with the stressors in their lifestyle largely as individuals. They negotiate stress-reducing changes and strategies on their own and in a "create-as-one-goes" context. However, the long-term acceptance of the dual-career family as a feasible option for men and women requires support from society as a whole.

We need to recognize these limited societal supports and do all that we can in our places of work to improve things. Flexible work hours, provision for adequate child care, rethinking of transfer and relocation policies, and increased career opportunities for women

are all social policy innovations that would help dual-career families thrive.

WHAT ARE USEFUL GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTIONS?

> We are both determined to make it work and take the time to make it work. We love each other very much and we are a good fit. Our roles are not real strongly defined. Among some of our friends the husband expected the wife to work all day and come home and serve him coffee. They are now divorced. (*Role-sharing father in his mid-30s who has been married for over ten years.*)

Talk about Conflicts

Without question there will be conflicts associated with spouses' views of what women and men should do and how they should be. These conflicts are inevitable. And they must be talked about—not just once, but time and again as they come up. The handling of household responsibilities and parenting is one example of an area frequently associated with relationship difficulties. Oftentimes men wish that they felt differently than they do. Women get tired of "policing" things to be sure their husbands do their fair share.

Spouses need to talk about their reactions and what does not feel right to them. They may need to examine the implicit and explicit expectations of their marital contract and how it may be related to traditional views of marriage. Open, honest discussions of what is preferred, what is needed, and what is workable are then possible.

A case in point is a couple in which the male felt unappreciated by his spouse. He was preparing dinner three nights a week and doing what he considered to be his fair share of the family work. What emerged during counseling was how his sense of male entitlement was getting in his way. He felt that he should be thanked for doing his share—after all, men typically have not done what he was doing. This attitude made his wife furious. Was she to be thanked

for being a successful business woman because women typically have not done so? Even more upsetting to her was his then-implicit assumption that she did not need to be thanked for preparing dinner the other four nights, because that is women's work. Important aspects of the counseling involved assisting him in understanding how he and his spouse could feel the way they did. Crucial to this process was developing the self-knowledge and conviction that expanding his own perspective to include his wife's viewpoint did not mean abandoning his own position or life experiences.

Seek Out Community Resources

Useful programs are often available through church or community agencies. Particularly helpful for dual-career families are workshops on stress management and marital enrichment. *Marital enrichment* is based on the premise that couples can provide support for each other and learn from each other if they have the opportunity to interact together as couples. Couples in a group interaction share their marriage by dialoguing in front of other couples. This provides an experiential basis for sharing their marital experience. Also crucial is the cross-couple identification, modeling, and support. Many women and men in dual-career families feel alone in their struggle with this emerging lifestyle, and hearing how other families deal with various conflicts and difficulties can be very helpful.

Like marital enrichment, *stress management* is particularly relevant to individuals attempting to fulfill roles that were thought to be mutally exclusive. A key aspect of stress management is learning how to define and recognize stress and its physical and emotional effects and how to minimize or prevent its chronic development. Often we are unaware of how stressed we are because we are used to it or simply assume it comes with the turf. Recognizing factors, such as those identified earlier which mediate or cause stress, can help to lower stress. Also important is understanding what stressors are typical for dual-career families. Somehow knowing that other people face the same dilemmas makes it a lot easier to cope.

Finally, relatively simple things such as good nutrition, regular physical exercise, or practice in self-assertion and time management can produce significant and positive results.

Change Is Rarely Easy

The dual-career family seems firmly ensconced in society. However, the changes that will make it so ordinary that it no longer warrants special attention are slow to come. Change is hard and is usually resisted until the benefits are visible. Many men are evaluating themselves less on work and occupational achievement and more on close family relationships. This is especially true of men who live in a dual-career family situation. There is much evidence that these changes benefit and enrich men's lives. They also encounter resistances—both from within men themselves and from the society at large. Astrachan (1986), in his book, *How Men Feel: Their Response to Women's Demands for Equality and Power,* concludes that although nearly all men approve of working wives, only 5 to 10 percent support women's demands for independence and equality. Although his findings may not accurately describe individuals in dual-career families, they do reflect the larger reality in which these women and men live. Those of us in dual-career families need to be aware of these complex issues and how they affect our lives.

Undertaking and maintaining a dual-career family successfully needs to proceed out of an understanding of the issues . . . and a measure of flexibility, compassion, and patience.

Further information on dual-career families is available from other publications by Lucia Albino Gilbert. These include her book, *Men in Dual-Career Families* and a special issue of *The Counseling Psychologist* entitled "Dual-Career Families in Perspective."

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